IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Original) A method comprising:

defining, by a server, a set of one or more properties defining a client configuration of interest;

communicating over a network, from the server to one or more clients, the configuration of interest; and

evaluating dynamically the state of each of the one or more clients relative to the configuration of interest communicated from the server.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising:

communicating a state relative to a configuration of interest for each of the one or more clients over the network to the server.

3. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising:

associating by the server, a configuration of interest with one or more actions.

4. (Original) The method of claim 3, further comprising:

executing on the client the actions associated with the configuration of interest.

5. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising:

re-evaluating the configurations of interest.

6. (Original) The method of claim 5, further comprising:

requesting updated configurations of interest.

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7. (Original) A method comprising:

receiving, on a client over a network from a server, one or more configurations of interest;

evaluating dynamically the state of the client relative to the configurations of interest received; and

sending a data structure from the client to the server, wherein the data structure includes data representative of client properties in relation to the configurations of interest on the client.

8. (Original) The method of claim 7, wherein evaluating the state of the client is performed dynamically on the client.

9. (Original) The method of claim 7, wherein receiving one or more configurations of interest includes receiving one or more configurations of interest updates.

10. (Original) The method of claim 9, wherein the one or more configurations of interest updates are received in response to the client communicating with the server to determine if an update is available.

11. (Original) The method of claim 10, wherein the client communicating with the server occurs upon the occurrence of an action.

12. (Original) A method comprising evaluating local properties of a client computer dynamically over a network for conformance with a configuration of interest defined on a server.

13. (Original) The method of claim 12, wherein the configuration of interest is associated with a set of actions, the actions including one or more actions selected from the group including: install, execute, delete, uninstall, and update.

14. (Original) A method comprising:

maintaining a list of configurations of interest and one or more actions associated with each of the one or more configurations of interest;

receiving data representing a current state of a client computer relative to each one of the configurations of interest;

determining an action to be carried out based on the data representing the current state of the computer and the configurations of interest;

receiving dynamically updated data representing the current state of the client computer relative to each one of the configurations of interest; and

determining dynamically the action to be carried out based on the updated data representing the current state of the client computer relative to each one of the configurations of interest.

15. (Original) The method of claim 14 further comprising carrying out the action.

16. (Original) The method of claim 14 wherein the action to be carried out comprises providing a set of actions to the client for each one of the configurations of interest that the current state of the client matches.

17. (Original) The method of claim 14 wherein the action to be carried out comprises performing a set of actions based on the configuration of interest.

18. (Original) The method of claim 17 wherein the set of actions comprises adding the client computer to a logical group of computers.

19. (Currently Amended) A system comprising:

a processor;

a memory; and

a display, the display configured to present a [[A]] user interface that is operable for editing a configuration of interest for storage on a server and distribution to clients over a network, wherein the configuration of interest, when distributed to clients, causes the clients to identify themselves to the server according to their states relative to the configuration of interest, further wherein the configuration of interest persists on the clients and upon modification of properties on a client encompassed by the configuration of interest the modification is communicated to the server.

20. (Original) The user interface of claim 19, wherein clients identified to the server are displayable as an association of clients and the user interface is further operable for performing administrative actions on the association of clients through manipulation of the configuration of interest.

21. (Original) The user interface of claim 20, wherein the administrative actions include installing and uninstalling software on the clients of the association.

22. (Original) The user interface of claim 19, wherein upon modification the client communicates an indication of the modification to the server.

23. (Currently Amended) A tangible computer readable medium, with instructions thereon to cause an appropriately configured computer to:

receive, on a client over a network from a server, one or more configurations of interest;

evaluate dynamically the state of the client relative to the configurations of interest received; and

send a data structure from the client to the server, wherein the data structure includes data representative of a client state in relation to the configurations of interest on the client.

24. (Original) The computer readable medium of claim 23, wherein the evaluation of the state of the client is dynamically performed.

25. (Original) The computer readable medium of claim 23, further including instructions to cause the appropriately configured computer to:

    receive one or more configurations of interest updates.

26. (Currently Amended) A tangible computer readable medium, with instructions thereon for causing an appropriately configured computer to dynamically evaluate local properties of a client computer, over a network, for conformance with a configuration of interest defined in a data store.

27. (Currently Amended) A tangible computer readable medium, with instructions thereon for causing an appropriately configured computer to:

    maintain a list of configurations of interest and one or more actions associated with each of the one or more configurations of interest;

    receive data representing a current state of a client computer relative to each one of the configurations of interest;

    determine an action to be carried out based on the data representing the current state of the computer and the configurations of interest;

    receive, dynamically, updated data representing the current state of the client computer relative to each one of the configurations of interest; and

    determine, dynamically, the action to be carried out based on the updated data representing the current state of the client computer relative to each one of the configurations of interest.

28. (Original) The computer readable medium of claim 27, further comprising instructions for causing the appropriately configured computer to:

    carry out the action.

29. (Original) The computer readable medium of claim 27, wherein the action to be carried out comprises a set of actions based on the configuration of interest.

30. (Original) The computer readable medium of claim 28, wherein the set of actions comprises actions for adding the client computer to a logical group of computers.

31. (Original) The computer readable medium of claim 27, further comprising instructions for causing the appropriately configured computer to:

provide a set of actions to the client for each one of the configurations of interest that the current state of the client matches

32. (Currently Amended) A system comprising:

a memory; and

a processor, the processor configured to provide:

a mechanism to define configurations of interest and to convey the configurations of interest; and

a mechanism to receive configurations of interest and to dynamically evaluate local properties relative to the configurations of interest.

33. (Original) A system comprising:

a processor;

a memory;

a network interface; and

software in the memory that is operable on the processor to cause the system to:

provide a mechanism to define configurations of interest,

distribute one or more of the configurations of interest to one or more client computers over the network interface, and

receive dynamically, over the network interface, data representing a current state of each of the one or more client computers relative to one or more of the configurations

of interest, wherein each client computer communicates current state data dynamically upon a state change.

34. (Original) The system of claim 33, wherein the software is further operable on the processor to:

provide a mechanism to define actions;

associate one or more actions with one or more of the configurations of interest; and

determine dynamically, one or more actions to be carried out based upon received client computer current state data.

35. (Original) The system of claim 34, further comprising:

a display; and

wherein the software is further operable on the processor to display a graphical representation of the configurations of interest and one or more client computers having a particular configuration of interest indicated by the received data representing the current state of each client.

36. (Original) A system comprising:

a processor;

a memory;

a network interface; and

software in the memory that is operable on the processor for causing the system to:

receive one or more configurations of interest over the network interface,

evaluate the properties of the system dynamically to determine a current system state in relation to each of the one or more configurations of interest, and

communicate, dynamically over the network interface to a server, the current system state in relation to each of the one or more configurations of interest.

37. (Original) The system of claim 36, wherein the software is further operable on the processor for causing the system to:

      check the server for updates to each of the one or more configurations of interest; and

      receive over the network interface and apply updates to each of the one or more configurations of interest.

38. (Original) The system of claim 36, wherein the software is further operable on the processor for causing the system to:

      receive commands from the server over the network interface to cause the system to perform one or more actions associated with one or more of the configurations of interest.

39. (Original) The system of claim 39, wherein the commands from the server include one or more commands selected from a list including: install, execute, delete, uninstall, and update.

40. (Currently Amended) A <u>tangible</u> computer readable medium with instructions thereon to cause appropriately configured computers to:

      define a set of one or more properties identifying a configuration of interest;

      associate the configuration of interest with one or more actions;

      communicate the configuration of interest from a server to one or more clients;

      evaluate the state of each of the one or more clients dynamically in relation to the configuration of interest communicated; and

      communicate a state relative to a configuration of interest for each of the one or more clients to the server.

41. (Original) The computer readable medium of claim 40 wherein the method further comprises executing the one or more actions associated with the configuration of interest.

42. (Original) The computer readable medium of claim 41 wherein the method further comprises providing a list of actions to at least one of the clients.

43.-48. (Canceled)

49. (Currently Amended) A <u>tangible</u> computer readable medium encoded with a data structure created by a server for access by a network device, the data structure comprising:

      one or more statements, each one of the statements comprising:

            a property identifier to be evaluated locally on a network device,

            a value with which the property is to be compared, and

            a comparison operator to compare the locally-evaluated property identifier with the value;

      logical operator data, the logical operator data comprising logical operators for combining the statements to be evaluated by the network device; and

      precedence operator data, the precedence operator data comprising precedence operators controlling the logical evaluation of the one or more statements and the logical operator data.

50. (Original) The computer readable medium of claim 49 wherein the property identifier data comprises data is selected from the group consisting of: an environment variable, a predefined variable, a registry key, a registry value, an INI value, a file, a file version, and a folder.

51. (Original) The computer readable medium of claim 49 wherein the comparison operator data is selected from the group consisting of: =, <>, <, <=, >, >=, EXISTS, MATCHES, and GREPMATCHES.

52. (Original) The computer readable medium of claim 49 wherein the logical operators are selected from the group consisting of: AND, OR, and NOT.

53. (Original) The computer readable medium of claim 49 wherein the precedence operators are parentheses.

54. (Currently Amended) A system comprising:

a processor;

a memory; and

a display, the display configured to present a [[A]] user interface operable to define a

configuration of interest, the user interface comprising:

a first field to define a property identifier to be evaluated locally on a network device,

a second field to define a value with which the property is to be compared, and

a third field to define a comparison operator to compare the locally-evaluated property

identifier with the value wherein the first field, the second field and the third field define a

statement.

55. (Original) The user interface of claim 54 further comprising a fourth field to define a logical

operator for combining two or statements to be evaluated by the network device.

56. (New) The method of claim 4, wherein the one or more actions includes a software

installation and wherein executing the one or more actions includes executing the software

installation.

57. (New) The method of claim 4, wherein the one or more actions includes uninstalling

software and wherein executing the one or more actions includes executing software un-

installation.

58. (New) A method comprising:

defining a configuration of interest, wherein the configuration of interest comprises at

least one state of at least one characteristic of a client computer;

storing the configuration of interest at a server computer;

transmitting the configuration of interest from the server computer to one or more client

computers; and

at each of the one or more client computers:

identifying the at least one characteristic in the configuration of interest;

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determining a client state with respect to the at least one characteristic in the

configuration of interest; and

communicating the client state to the server.

59. (New) The method of claim 58, further comprising:

receiving the client state at the server;

comparing the client state to the configuration of interest;

determining whether a related action exists, wherein the related action is an action to be

executed when a client has a state as defined by the configuration of interest; and

when the related action exists, executing the related action.

60. (New) The method of claim 59, wherein the related action comprises at least one of: a

software installation, a software un-installation, or adding the client computer to a logical group

of computers.

61. (New) The method of claim 58, wherein the at least one state of at least one characteristic of

the client computer includes a software parameter setting, a hardware configuration parameter, or

a network configuration parameter of the client computer.